

Meeting Recap: Nov. 5, 2014

Silver Spring Arts & Entertainment District Advisory Committee

Attendees: Mike, Alan B., Alan F., Ray and guest Jane Redicker from the Greater Silver Spring Chamber of Commerce

Metro Plaza Redevelopment: [Harvey Maisel, Maisel Development Co.](#); Sean Stadler, WDG Architects; [Susan Reutershan, Lerch Early & Brewer](#)

The presenters outlined a plan that would largely eliminate the current businesses on the corner of Colesville Road and East West Highway and replace them with two 14-story high-rise apartment buildings. The plan is somewhat tentative because of the existence of a WMATA substation, which WMATA must be able to access, and the possibility of relocating that station and gaining an additional easement that would encompass a Purple Line power substation. The developer plans to build a joint driveway to allow maintenance access and also serve the Falklands development.

Current plans call for a covered plaza in front of the substation that presents possibilities for murals or other public art. There will be enough of a setback along East West to allow for a public plaza where the developer envisions decorative lighting, a water feature and additional likely opportunities for public art.

The two buildings, which would include 18,000 square feet of street retail and 550 residential units, would be connected in the upper levels. The look is expected to be clean and contemporary with a glass tower on the corner, a green roof with terraces and a pool, and some below-grade parking. Additional above-grade parking would be disguised to look attractive from the street.

The presenters asked for a letter of support from the committee, which in turn asked for a copy of the presentation to share with those unable to attend the meeting.

Follow up: As of this writing, the presentation has not been delivered as requested, therefore no follow up is needed at this time.

2014-2015 Priorities and Projects

The committee revisited the list of suggested projects and priorities presented at the September meeting. We were reminded that we are a policy group, not a task-oriented group, as we have no staff or other resources to carry out projects, and that we should be looking at the A&E District from the 30,000-foot level.

Given that our charge reads "The Committee will advise the County Executive and the Silver Spring Regional Center on how to create and support opportunities for arts and entertainment entities to help achieve the goals of the Silver Spring Arts & Entertainment District," it's

appropriate for this committee to suggest some specific ways to improve and strengthen the District. Members agreed that many of the suggestions fit under this rubric and will send a letter to the county executive to present those ideas.

The letter will not address the food truck issue, as this is a larger issue the county and the business community are currently struggling with from a policy perspective. Nor will we ask for increased funding for the Urban District, as this request would need to come from that group and demonstrate a need for the increase. The pilot busking program is well underway and thus will not be addressed in this letter.

The letter will address the need for new lighting and pedestrian wayfinding, a push for placemaking and funding for a new Silver Spring marketing and branding initiative. In addition, the committee felt that in light of the gubernatorial election results, funding for the arts could be in danger of being cut. The letter will urge the county executive to unite the state delegation in an effort to preserve funding for the state arts council, as any cuts at that level will quickly trickle down to the county's arts community and organizations.

Follow up: As some of these issues have budget implications, we will consider additional information and discussions of specific budget issues at the January meeting to include in the letter.

Other business: Reemberto is expecting letters of confirmation for new three-year terms for members and a new chair

Next meeting: 7 p.m. Tuesday, Jan. 13, Silver Spring Civic Building. Tentative agenda items include the annual presentation from the county's Recreation Department [and budget discussions](#).